Module Description, available in: EN

Management of Complex Processes

General Information

Number of ECTS Credits

3

Module code

CM_ComplPro

Valid for academic year

2025-26

Last modification

2022-01-23

Coordinator of the module

Harold Tiemessen (OST, harold.tiemessen@ost.ch)

Explanations regarding the language definitions for each location:

- Instruction is given in the language defined below for each location/each time the module is held.
- Documentation is available in the languages defined below. Where documents are in several languages, the percentage distribution is shown (100% = all the documentation).
- The examination is available 100% in the languages shown for each location/each time it is held.

	Lausanne			Lugano	Zurich		
Instruction	**X** E 100%				**X** E 100%		
Documentation	**X** E 100%				**X** E 100%		
Examination	**X** E 100%				**X** E 100%		

Module Category

CM Context module

Profile Recommendations

This module is recommended for the following profiles:

	Lausanne	Zurich
Profile	CS, EIE, ME	CS, EIE, EnEn, ME, MA, Avi, BT, Pho

Lessons

2 lecture periods and 1 tutorial period per week

Entry level competences

Prerequisites, previous knowledge

Brief course description of module objectives and content

One of the biggest challenges encountered in management is recognizing opportunities and making use of them while giving consideration to the associated risks. The constantly increasing dynamism and complexity of the environment in which companies and organizations operate is, however, making it difficult to take successful decisions. Multifactorial correlations, non-linearities, feedback effects and time lags make it difficult to correctly predict the impacts of a decision.
Students gain insight into the methods and tools employed for decision-making when faced with complex questions. They learn about cause-and-effect diagrams and quantitative simulation models and apply these in case studies.

Aims, content, methods

Learning objectives and competencies to be acquired

Students

- are familiar with the systemic approach, can correctly identify the limits of a system and are aware that models only depict reality imperfectly
- are able to analyze complex processes applying the correct methodology and communicate about them
- know how to manage conflicts of objectives with the correct methodology (e.g. costs versus quality)
- can depict complex processes as a cause-and-effect network
- can depict technical and operational processes in the form of an event-orientated simulation model
- are familiar with the most important steps of a simulation study
- understand the problem-solving cycle as a creative process
- have learned to implement systemic problem-solving methods in operational practice

Module content with weighting of different components

1. Basics of types of decision, decision making process and six sources of influence
2. Shared mental models
3. Introduction to system dynamics (causal loop diagrams, stocks and flows, analysis of dynamic system behavior)
4. Simulation paradigms applied to understand behavior of dynamic systems governed by human decisions

Teaching and learning methods

Lecture with examples to be solved in a group. Exercises and case studies.

Literature

- Sterman J: Business Dynamics. McGraw-Hill (2010). ISBN 978-0071068123
- Senge P.: Die fünfte Disziplin. Klett-Cotta (2008). ISBN 978-3608913798
- Warren K.: Competitive Strategy Dynamics. Wiley (2002) ISBN 978-0471899495
- Sherwood D.: Den Wald vor lauter Bäumen sehen. Wiley (2003). ISBN 978-3527500574
- Gandolfi, A: Von Menschen und Ameisen. Orell Füssli (2001). ISBN 978-3280026694
- Vester F.: The Art of Interconnected Thinking (2007) ISBN 978-3-939314-05-9
- Probst G. & Ulrich H.: Anleitung zum ganzheitlichen Denken und Handeln (1988) ISBN 3-258-03976-3 - Pensée globale et management : résoudre les problèmes complexes (1989) ISBN 2-7081-1066-7
- Law, A.M.: Simulation modeling and analysis. McGraw Hill Boston (2006). ISBN 978-0071255196
- Patterson K., Grenny J., Maxfield D., McMillan R., Switzler A.: Influencer (2008) ISBN 13: 978-0-07-148499-2.

Assessment

Additional performance assessment during the semester

The module does not contain an additional performance assessment during the semester

Basic principle for exams

As a rule, all standard final exams are conducted in written form. For resit exams, lecturers will communicate the exam format (written/oral) together with the exam schedule.

Standard final exam for a module and written resit exam

Kind of exam

Written exam

Duration of exam

120 minutes

Permissible aids

Aids permitted as specified below:

Permissible electronic aids

No electronic aids permitted

Other permissible aids

Notes and books

Exception: In case of an electronic Moodle exam, adjustments to the permissible aids may occur. Lecturers will announce the final permissible aids prior to the exam session.

Special case: Resit exam as oral exam

Kind of exam

Oral exam

Duration of exam

30 minutes

Permissible aids

Aids permitted as specified below:

Permissible electronic aids

No electronic aids permitted

Other permissible aids

Notes and books